

REMARKS

This application contains claims 1 - 41. Claims 6, 15 and 27 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 7, 9, 14, 17, 22, 26, 28 and 34 are hereby amended. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 6-13, 15, 17, 22-25, 27-29 and 34-41 were objected to for depending from rejected base claims, but were deemed to recite patentable subject matter. Applicant has accordingly amended the claims as follows:

- Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 6, now canceled. Claims 7 and 9, which formerly depended from claim 6, have been amended to depend from claim 1.
- Independent claim 14 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 15, now canceled.
- Claim 17 has been amended to stand as an independent claim, incorporating the limitations of original claims 14 and 16, from which claim 17 formerly depended.
- Claim 22 has been amended to stand as an independent claim, incorporating the limitations of original claim 14, from which claim 22 formerly depended.
- Independent claim 26 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 27, now canceled. Claim 28, which formerly depended from claim 27, has been amended to depend from claim 26.
- Claim 34 has been amended to stand as an independent claim, incorporating the limitations of original claim 26, from which claim 34 formerly depended.

The remaining claims in this application all depend, directly or indirectly from one of the above amended independent claims. Therefore, all the claims in this application are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-5, 14, 16, 18-21, 26 and 30-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) or 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Lewis (U.S. Patent 6,259,898). While disagreeing with at least some of the grounds of rejection, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 14 and 26 as noted above in order to expedite issuance of a patent on the subject matter that the Examiner found to be allowable. Based on these amendments, claims 2-5, 16, 18-21 and 30-33 now depend from allowable base claims, and are therefore believed to be allowable, as well. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute the subject matter of the original claims in a continuation of this application.

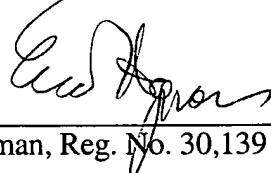
Applicant has studied the additional references made of record by the Examiner and believes all the claims in the present patent application to be patentable over these references, whether they are taken individually or in any combination.

Applicant believes the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the objections and grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in the present application are in order for allowance. Notice to this effect is hereby requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING:

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Linda Marie D'Elia February 2, 2005